

TABLE 18. Median number of years to doctorate award, by broad field of study: Selected years, 1983–2008

Field of study and time to degree	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003	2008
All fields						
Since baccalaureate	9.9	10.6	10.7	10.5	10.2	9.4
Since starting graduate school	8.2	8.7	8.7	8.3	8.5	7.7
Life sciences ^a						
Since baccalaureate	8.0	9.0	9.5	9.2	8.9	8.6
Since starting graduate school	6.7	7.5	7.7	7.5	7.2	6.9
Physical sciences ^b						
Since baccalaureate	7.2	7.5	8.3	8.0	7.8	7.7
Since starting graduate school	6.2	6.7	7.0	6.7	6.7	6.7
Social sciences ^c						
Since baccalaureate	9.5	10.6	10.6	10.0	10.0	9.6
Since starting graduate school	8.0	8.8	8.7	7.9	8.2	7.7
Engineering						
Since baccalaureate	8.1	8.2	9.0	8.8	8.6	7.9
Since starting graduate school	6.7	6.7	7.2	7.2	7.3	6.7
Education						
Since baccalaureate	14.2	17.0	19.3	20.0	18.1	17.0
Since starting graduate school	11.7	13.9	15.7	15.2	13.2	12.7
Humanities						
Since baccalaureate	11.2	12.3	12.0	11.6	11.3	11.3
Since starting graduate school	9.7	10.7	10.2	9.7	9.7	9.3
Other fields						
Since baccalaureate	12.1	13.1	13.3	13.7	13.8	12.1
Since starting graduate school	9.8	10.7	10.7	10.7	10.7	9.3

^a Includes agricultural sciences/natural resources, biological/biomedical sciences, and health sciences.

^b Includes mathematics and computer and information sciences.

^c Includes psychology.

SOURCE: NSF/NIH/USED/USDA/NEH/NASA, 2008 Survey of Earned Doctorates.